

PhD RESEARCH

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Diffusion and reception of modern architecture in Liège (1928-1939)

- [Original title : *Diffusion et réception de l'architecture moderne à Liège (1928-1939)*]
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The objective of this thesis is to sketch the most accurate portrait possible of modern architecture in Liège in the 1930s through an analysis of local architectural reviews and an exhaustive study of architectural production from 1928 to 1939.

The first research axis demonstrates the wide range of views held by review editors. There were thus a range of doctrinaire (*L'Équerre*), industrial (*La Technique des travaux*), and corporatist (*Le Rez-de-chaussee*) reviews. Beyond contributing to the diffusion of architectural forms and theories, reviews also provided forums for debate not confined to Brussels. Like those in the capital, periodicals in Liège represented the great struggles – be they aesthetic, social, economic, or political – that marked Belgian society in between the two world wars.

The second research axis concerns questions of reception and draws on an analysis of building authorization requests between 1928 and 1939.

The first narrative demonstrates the late character of the emergence of modern architecture in Liège. Unlike Brussels, Liège lost its modernist thinkers after the war. This dearth explains Liège architects' struggle to spread their ideas in the face of conservative masters of construction.

It is thus not shocking that Liège did not see the rare successful application of modern architecture until later. In the 11 years covered by our study, only the houses built for the Tribouillet contest (1930) and Queen Astrid's playground pavilion appear as evidence of modern architecture's influence. Besides these manifestations, the immense majority of architectural production in Liège diverged from theoretical principles, instead favoring a freer and more intuitive interpretation that gave birth to new eclecticism.